



July 1, 2019

Les Reardanz, CEO/Executive Director
Port of Everett Commissioner Glen Bachman
Port of Everett Commissioner Bruce Fingarson
Port of Everett Commissioner Tom Stiger

SENT VIA EMAIL

Dear Mr. Reardanz and Port Commissioners Bachman, Fingarson and Stiger:

I am writing to you on behalf of the residents of the City of Everett that I represent, who also pay property taxes to the Port of Everett. The purpose of my letter is to ask that you cease the collection of parking fees for events that occur on Port property.

Over the past several weeks, I have fielded numerous complaints from Everett residents who are now being charged a \$2 parking fee for the privilege of parking in your unimproved gravel parking lot while they attend the Sunday Farmer's Market and the City of Everett-sponsored *Music at the Marina*. I'm sure you are also hearing from some of these taxpayers from your district, many of whom believe this is an effort to thwart the public's access to the waterfront.

In 2019, the Port of Everett is expected to collect \$5 million in property taxes from residents in your taxing district – 4.9% of your total revenue (*Port of Everett Citizen Budget Guide* 2019, p.3). The purpose of your collection of property taxes is to provide access to the waterfront for the public, but your 2019 budgeted expense for public access is only \$510,000 – 0.5% of the total expenditures (p.3), plus an additional \$55,000 for "Enhancing Public Access" strategic initiatives (p.4). Indeed, over the past 10 years, the Port of Everett has collected more than \$43 million in property taxes from Everett, Mukilteo, Marysville, and Tulalip residents. Many of these taxpayers are wondering what they are getting for their money.

In this context, the imposition of a \$2 parking fee seems designed to further inhibit public access. Even if you were to collect from 10,000 drivers over the course of this summer, the \$20,000 in revenue would be offset by the staffing cost of collecting it and this marginal revenue would represent a miniscule fraction (less than 0.02%) of the Port's \$102 million budget for this year. As such, the collection of this fee cannot be construed as a financial decision, which leaves those whom you represent to view it as a statement to the public. Your message is being received loud and clear by our mutual taxpayers: STAY AWAY.

Your actions are puzzling because, in addition to providing valuable recreational opportunities to your constituents, the public and private investment the

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organizations are making in programming at the Port of Everett creates marketable benefits for your tenants, their customers, hotel guests, and (soon) residents of Port properties. Rather than treating these events as a nuisance, it behooves you to facilitate them, since they enhance the value and desirability of your property holdings.

I urge you to reconsider your decision to charge our residents for parking while they attend free events that they are already supporting with their tax dollars and other events sponsored by community organizations. In the context of your budget, it seems fair for you to allocate a portion of this year's property tax collections to support public parking.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Brenda Stonecipher".

Brenda Stonecipher
Everett City Council Position 6

cc: Mayor Cassie Franklin
Deputy Mayor Nick Harper
Chief of Staff Lyle Ryan
Council President Scott Bader
Council Vice-President Judy Tuohy
Councilmember Jeff Moore
Councilmember Scott Murphy
Councilmember Paul Roberts
Councilmember Liz Vogeli